

Corps Announces Submission of final rule for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Programmatic Regulations to be delayed

WASHINGTON (December 11, 2002) -- The United States Army Corps of Engineers, with the concurrence of acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Les Brownlee, announced today a delay in the submission of the final rule for the Programmatic Regulations for the restoration of the Everglades.

The Water Resource Development Act of 2000 required the Army to finalize the Programmatic Regulations by December 11, 2002. The Army expects to have the regulations submitted to the Office of Management and Budget soon to begin the Administration's review process, with a target of early 2003 for publication of the final Programmatic Regulations.

Following the administrative review, the regulations will be submitted to the Department of the Interior and the state of Florida for concurrence as required by WRDA 2000. The final rule will be published in the Federal Register.

The purpose of the Programmatic Regulations is to establish the processes and procedures needed to implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program (CERP), and to ensure the goals and purposes of CERP are achieved. These include the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including flood protection.

According to Brownlee, "The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, through an extensive outreach program, has taken great care to ensure that these interested parties, as well as local, Tribal, state and federal organizations, have had the opportunity to provide input into the development of these regulations. I regret that these regulations will not be final until after December 11. I have informed the Congressional leadership, emphasizing that we will continue to work earnestly with all interested parties to finalize the regulations as quickly as possible."

The Army published the proposed draft Programmatic Regulations for comment on August 2, 2002. During the public comment period, which closed October 1, more than 800 comments were received. Those comments were considered in the development of the proposed final rule.

The Director of Civil Works for the Corps, Maj. Gen. Robert Griffin, said, "While we have worked hard to meet the December 11th requirement in the statute, I am convinced that taking additional time now to complete the Programmatic Regulations is a solid investment in the future of the Everglades.

"By focusing on the quality of the final regulations, we will have done the best we

can to ensure the success of restoring the Everglades, and to ensure the greatest return on the investment and expectations of the nation."

For more information:

- [Jacksonville District Home Page](#)
- What the Everglades Programmatic Regulations Will Do December 11, 2002